



Ronald Jay Sjoerdsma

July 18, 1951 - March 18, 2026

Ronald Jay Sjoerdsma, lately of Cadillac, MI, was drawn into the loving arms of his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, on March 18, 2026. A humble, selfless servant of others, Ron unmistakably modeled genuine, Christlike manhood.

Ron was born on July 18, 1951, the oldest of the five children of Ted and Barb Sjoerdsma. He held a BA from Dordt College, a Masters from the University of Iowa, and a PhD from UCLA. He spent over 30 years as a professor of education at Calvin University. Additionally, he consulted with the Van Andel Institute to find better ways to integrate technology into the classroom.

Ron's interests were wide and varied. He loved to travel, perhaps sparked by a trip around the world when he was a young boy. In later life, he traveled widely throughout Europe and to India and Liberia, and road-tripped around the continental US. Another of Ron's passions was good food, and he delighted in trying new restaurants. Ron loved cars, music, books, and good company. He was exceptionally handy, and his grandchildren believed he could fix anything.

Ron could be entertained by (and discuss at length) just about any sport or competition, but his first love was baseball, especially when the LA Dodgers were playing. He also fervently supported the University of Iowa. One of Ron's favorite pastimes was watching his grandchildren play sports or perform in

other ways. His loving support will be greatly missed.

Ron cared deeply about people. Sit or stand near him at a sporting event or other gathering, and you could expect to be engaged in conversation. He tried to hear each person's "story" and made new friends everywhere he went.

He is survived by Judi (Fluck), his beloved wife of almost 53 years; his daughters, Barbara Ford (Lance), Jeni VanNoord (Jeff), and Melissa Sjoerdsma-McNeill; five grandchildren: Jada, Dries, Drake and Dax VanNoord, and Yuki Ford; as well as his siblings, Gregg (Ann Dena), Joel (Lucrecia), and Lisa VandeLune (Brian) and numerous nieces and nephews. Ron was predeceased by his parents, his brother Doug (Kate), and son-in-law CJ McNeill.

Memorial services will be held 3:00 PM Sunday, April 12, 2026 at Peterson Funeral and Cremation Services in Cadillac. Friends may meet the family one hour prior to the service at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a memorial tree through thetreesremember.com. An online guestbook is available at www.petersonfh.com.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

APR 12. 3:00 PM (ET)

Peterson Funeral and Cremation Services
205 East Cass Street
Cadillac, MI 49601

Tribute Wall

JS

“ So sorry to hear about Uncle Ron's passing. He was respected, well loved, and humble. His soft spoken presence will be missed. Praying for your family <3

Janae Siford - April 12 at 10:16 PM

MT

“ Much love, Pat Tergerson purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Ronald Jay Sjoerdsma.



Much love, Pat Tergerson - April 09 at 12:33 PM

MT

“ Much love, Pat Tergerson planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Ronald Jay Sjoerdsma.

Much love, Pat Tergerson - April 09 at 12:33 PM

PS

“ I send my condolences to Ron's family. I had the privilege of working with Ron at Calvin University. I appreciated his ability to listen well and to support me and each of our colleagues. His passion for learning and teaching provided a powerful model for all. I was thrilled to share a stage with Ron for a brief moment - at the time of our retirement from the University.

Philip Stegink - April 08 at 07:49 PM

JR

“ *Jill and Rusty purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Ronald Jay Sjoerdsma.*



Jill and Rusty - April 08 at 11:52 AM

Jl

“ *Unfortunately, I will not be able to join the family in celebrating the impactful, loving, multifaceted life of my wonderful brother-in-law, who devotedly took care of my precious sister. Our family loved and respected Ron greatly, and he will be sorely missed. ❤️ Aunt Janice*

Janice Itescu - April 07 at 09:04 PM

RK

“ *Ron was such a good college friend. We had many theatre adventures together! My dear roommate, Judi, begged to come with us to hike in a state park. I thought she just wanted an adventure. She DID. But Ron was the adventure she really wanted! I know that he will be SO missed. May God grant you all peace, be filled with joy in remembering his love of you all, and give you strength to endure life without of his gentle presence.*

Ron and Ila Klemm - April 05 at 09:23 AM

AL

“ Lynn and I are praying for all of you as you grieve the loss of Ron’s “presence” with you. We have such fond memories of Ron, his engaging intellect, kindness, and his love of Judi and daughters. What a legacy for the family and next generation. We also celebrate with you that he is at home with Jesus.
Shalom,
Allen and Lynn

Allen Eugene Likkel - March 26 at 10:28 PM

BK

“ I’m so sorry to hear about Ron’s passing. He took me under his wing as a fledgling college teacher and the two of us traveled together to India, England and Ukraine to give presentations. Never one to miss an adventure, along the way to those places we spent a day each touring Paris, Dublin and Budapest. Ron was a wonderful colleague and friend. We team taught whenever we got the opportunity. I will miss him.

Bob Keeley - March 26 at 07:01 AM



“ Dr. Ron - My long-time travel buddy and Christian school developer in Liberia. You will be missed greatly on both continents.

Jim Jadrich - March 25 at 08:29 PM

MG

“ I was privileged to know Ron and teach Melissa. I enjoyed them both. My condolences to the family.
Marji Gunnoe, Calvin

M Gunnoe - March 25 at 03:27 PM



“ Thank you, Ron, for being such a great example of a dad to Allison & Josh, and such a wonderful friend to me. Love always.

Holly Phelps - March 25 at 12:31 PM

HP

“ Holly P. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Ronald Jay Sjoerdsma.

Holly P. - March 25 at 12:29 PM